

# DEPARTMENT of the INTERIOR

## news release

FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE  
Bureau of Sport Fisheries and Wildlife

For Release to PMs March 10, 1971

Walker 343-5634

### INTERIOR TO FUND SAFETY TRAINING TO CUT DOWN ON HUNTING ACCIDENTS

State wildlife agencies have long had hunter safety training programs, but frequently these were hampered by insufficient funds. New Federal financial help, beginning July 1, will now let these States upgrade programs.

The financial incentive, which may total \$3.5 million annually, is the result of 1970 amendments to long-existing legislation on Federal aid for wildlife restoration. A State may be allocated from \$33,000 to \$115,000 for use in 1972. This would permit that State to mount federally assisted programs varying from \$44,000 to \$153,000, including its matching share.

Like the other wildlife projects' financing, the hunter safety training money will be provided to cover as much as 75 percent of State costs for programs. Only improvements in existing programs or new ones will be financed, and apportionment will be based on State population.

Money will come from Federal handgun excise taxes which previously went into general funds of the Treasury Department, but which will, as of July 1 this year, come to the Interior Department's Bureau of Sport Fisheries and Wildlife for allocation to the States.

Stressing that the Federal Government will not set up or operate any of the safety programs, the Bureau indicated today that the instruction should help hunters avoid accidents and may also include first aid and survival training. Sporting ethics, basic principles of wildlife management, and safe archery practices may be part of the training.

Federal aid will also be available for target ranges to provide training facilities.

The Bureau of Sport Fisheries and Wildlife said it will issue standards soon to aid the States in training instructors, developing materials, and coordinating training programs.

X X X

31840-71